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Subject: Chican@ Students and History Must Not be "In the Shadows"

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Dear History/Science Framework Committee:

In the interest of fairness and culturally relevant education, which has become more pressing than ever in history, I call upon you to work diligently and in the words of Cesar Chavez "in good faith" to include the important historic contributions of Chican@s and Latin@s in these texts. As a parent, a composition and Chican@ Studies professor, and former high school teacher, I know first hand of the absence of students of color textbooks and of the terrible outcomes when this problem goes unattended.

In Los Angeles and the Southwest we have been leading a Raza and Ethnic Studies Now movement that has woken up students, teachers and communities to this crisis. As programs in Arizona have shown (see empirical research of Christine Sleeter, Nolan Cabrera and the Cambium Report) Chican@ and Ethnic Studies programs do tremendous work in engaging students of color, nurturing an "academic identity" and self esteem, improving academic scores widely, and sending them to college. The solutions are there, and we need to make those decisions.

We hope that the proposed draft of the California framework for K-12 U.S. History and Social Science textbooks works diligently and "in good faith" to be culturally inclusive, to not place Chican@ and Raza youth and their histories in the shadows, and to foster a more culturally relevant classroom.

I honor the work of students and community in Sacramento for Ethnic Studies, and I wish you the best in your current scholastic endeavors.

Respectfully,

Elias Serna
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